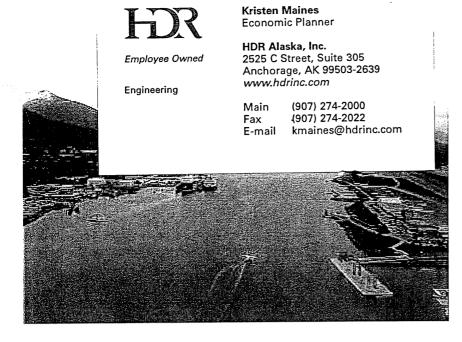
## R-2 Gravina Access Project Alternatives Evaluation Summary Report: Public Comment Summary, June 2002

Public and agency issues summary, and selected agency correspondence.

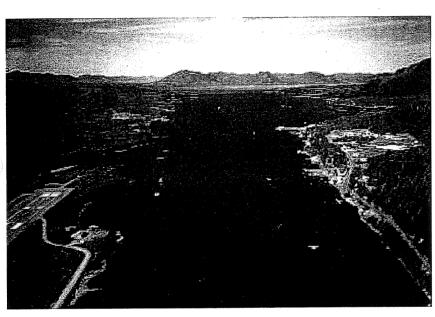
The full report is on file with ADOT&PF.



## **Gravina Access Project**

## Alternatives Evaluation Summary Report

## Public Comment Summary





Agreement No: 36893013 DOT&PF Project No: 67698 Federal Project No: ACHP-0922(5)

## Prepared for:

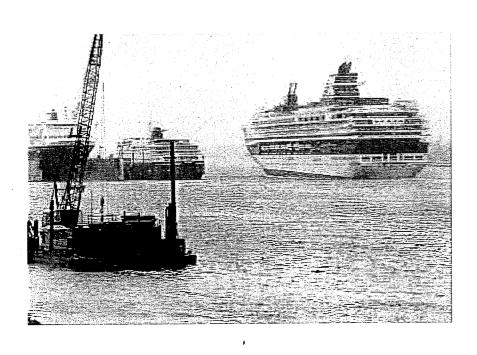


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June 2002



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## 1.0 Project Background

The Gravina Access Project (GAP) is a high priority project authorized by the Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century (TEA-21), which allocated approximately \$20 million toward "constructing a bridge joining the Island of Gravina to the Community of Ketchikan on Revilla Island." The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) contracted with HDR Alaska, Inc. in 1999 to conduct engineering and environmental studies of the project area and develop and investigate options for improved access between Revillagigedo and Gravina islands.

In Spring 2000, the project team developed 18 alternative concepts for crossing Tongass Narrows. These included multiple types of bridges, ferry connections that would augment the existing airport ferry service, and underwater tunnels. A screening process, based on input from federal, state, and local agencies, was used to evaluate these options and help identify the proposed reasonable alternatives that would be studied in greater detail in the draft environmental impact statement.

In 2001, the project team conducted additional engineering and environmental studies of the build alternatives to further refine the design and engineering requirements of the alternatives and to generally characterize the potential environmental impacts that might result from construction and long-term use of the project. With information obtained from these studies, the DOT&PF identified a recommended alternative (F3) for the community's consideration and discussion.

### 2.0 Introduction

On January 7, 2002, the DOT&PF announced their recommended alternative for the Gravina Access Project—Alternative F3, a bridge alternative that crosses Pennock Island. Since the announcement, the Gravina Access Project team has sought public input from community members on the evaluation of all of the alternatives currently under consideration, including DOT&PF's recommendation for F3 and the no build alternative.

This document summarizes the public comments received between January and April 2002 on the reasonable alternatives since DOT&PF's announcement in January. The public has provided input in various ways, including email, written correspondence, and through verbal input at various public meetings. Tables 2 and 3 provide a summary of the public comments received via comment sheets, letters, and email. Table 2 summarizes comments specific to the F3 Alternative, and Table 3 summarizes the comments on the issues ranging from the affected environment, bridge design, economic impact, navigational issues, and other alternatives. Also included in this document in the appendix are the following: DOT&PF's January 7, 2002 press release; media material promoting the open house meetings in Ketchikan; the February 2002 Gravina Access Project newsletter; copies of public comment sheets, letters, and emails received; meeting sign-in sheets, and articles and editorials published in the Ketchikan Daily News.

## 3.0 Description of Reasonable Alternatives

Table 1 provides a summary description of the project alternatives as currently configured, including terminus locations, general alignment across Tongass Narrows, and bridge clearances and dimensions. All of the alternatives include a road on Gravina Island to connect the crossing terminus with both the airport terminal and developable land at the northern end of the Airport Reserve property. Roadway construction immediately south of the airport runway would be designed to accommodate runway expansion as a bridge over the road.

Table 1. Description of Reasonable Alternatives

Table 1. Description of Reasonable Alternatives				
Alternative and Mode	Bridge Vertical Clearance (VC), Horizontal Clearance (HC), Height (H), and Length (L)	Ter. Revillagigedo Island ("Takeoff")	mini Gravina Island ("Touchdown")	General Alignment Across Tongass Narrows
No-Action	N/A	Existing airport ferry terminal	Existing airport ferry, east of Airport	Existing (2.8 miles north of downtown)
C3(a) Bridge	VC = 200'; HC = 650' H = 250'; L = 0.9/1.0 mile	Signal Road	South of airport terminal	1,600' north of airport terminal
C3(b) Bridge	VC = 120'; HC = 500' H = 150'; L = 0.8 mile	Signal Road	At airport terminal	2,600' north of airport terminal
C4 Bridge	VC = 200'; HC = 650' H = 250'; L = 0.9/1.0 mile	Tongass Ave. north of Cambria Drive	South of airport terminal	1,600' north of airport terminal
D1 Bridge	VC = 120'; HC = 500' H = 150'; L = 0.6 mile	Tongass Ave. near airport ferry	At airport terminal	Due east of airport terminal
F3 Bridges	East Channel: VC = 60'; HC = 500' H = 100'; L = 0.4 mile West Channel: VC = 200'; HC = 650' H = 250'; L = 0.5/0.6 mile	Tongass Ave. south of U.S. Coast Guard base and north of Forest Park Subdivision	South of airport	East Channel: 1.1 miles south of downtown West Channel: 3.2 miles south of airport terminal
G2 Ferry	N/A	Peninsula Point	Lewis Point	2.1 miles north of airport
G3 Ferry	N/A	Downtown, near Plaza Mall	South of airport	0.9 miles south of airport
G4 Ferry	N/A	Adjacent to existing ferry terminal	Adjacent to existing ferry terminal	2.8 miles north of downtown

## 4.0 Brief Summary of Public Involvement Activities

## We'd Like Your Input!

The public and the Ketchikan community were encouraged to provide input. Many avenues existed for the community to learn about the reasonable alternatives under consideration. The following list summarizes the public involvement activities in

which the community could learn more about the project and provide input.

- > Technical reports and an evaluation of the alternatives were made available to the public at the Ketchikan Public Library and at the Gravina Access Project Office in January.
- > The website was updated with digital versions of the Technical Reports and descriptions of recent project activities.
- For the February 11 and 27, 2002 Public Open Houses at the Ted Ferry Civic Center in Ketchikan, advertisements appeared in the Ketchikan Daily News. Notices were also distributed throughout the community and postcard notices were mailed (for the Feb. 11 Open House).
- Notices advertising both meetings were posted at the following locations: Chamber of Commerce offices, the AMHS/IFA Ferry Terminal, Ted Ferry Civic Center, Cape Fox Lodge, Ketchikan Public Library, Wells Fargo Building lobby downtown, Salmon Landing Market, Ketchikan City Hall, Ketchikan Gateway Borough Planning Office, Tatsuda's Market, Carrs, A & P, UAS, and Saxman City Hall.
- A Public Service Announcement was sent to three Ketchikan radio stations (KFMJ, KGTW, and KRBD) to advertise the upcoming open house meetings.
- ➤ Published and made available the latest Gravina Access Project newsletter in the February 9<sup>th</sup> Ketchikan Daily newspaper. The newsletter also was available at the open houses and made available on the website.
- > Additional input forums, in addition to the two Open House Meetings, included:
  - Jan. 7 Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly meeting
  - Jan. 21 Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly meeting
  - Feb. 7 Ketchikan City Council meeting
  - Feb. 8 Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce at City Council Chambers
  - Feb. 8 Saxman City Council, Saxman IRA Council, and the Cape Fox Corporation Board at Saxman City Hall
  - Feb. 19 Ketchikan Visitors Bureau meeting
  - Feb. 26 Ketchikan Gateway Borough Planning Commission meeting
  - Feb. 28 Cape Fox Corporation CEO, Saxman Mayor, and Marine Pilot
  - Feb. 28 Ketchikan Economic Development Authority meeting
  - March 5 U.S. Coast Guard meeting
  - March 6 Project Development Team meeting
  - March 6 Elected officials meeting at Ted Ferry Civic Center
  - March 12 Ketchikan Gateway Borough Planning Commission

## 5.0 Summary of Public Comment

The public was given many opportunities to comment on the project alternatives and the evaluation of project impacts. From DOT&PF's recommended alternative announcement in January through March 15, the project team accepted comments on DOT&PF's recommended Pennock Island alternative (F3) and the evaluation of alternatives that led to that recommendation. While the deadline for submitting public comment was March 15, comments received through mid-April are included in this summary. Approximately 150 comments were received through letters, emails, and comment sheets between January and April 2002. Comment sheets were provided to the public at the public open houses in Ketchikan, and public comments were submitted by mail or sent via email through the website or directly to Gravina Access Project team members. The following tables present a summary of the written questions, comments, and concerns expressed by the public; the comments have been presented in this format for easy reference.

In addition to public comments received, the following agencies submitted letters or emails that are also summarized in the tables. Copies of these letters and other correspondence can be found in Appendix E.

- Alaska Coastwise Pilots Association
- Cape Fox Corporation
- Greater Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce
- Island Wings Air Service
- Ketchikan Visitors Bureau
- Northwest Cruiseship Association
- Organized Village of Saxman
- Sierra Club
- SouthEast Alaska Pilots Association
- Southeast Alaska Conservation Council
- Tongass Conservation Society
- U.S. Department of Commerce National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- U.S. Department of Transportation United States Coast Guard

Table 2. Public Comments Submitted Specific to Alternative F3 (January – April 2002)

Issue	Public Comments on Alternative F3
Aviation	Bridges are a possible hazard to aviation.
Cost	There are too many unresolved issues related to cost for F3.
	F3 would quadruple the property value on Pennock Island, which would
	quadruple property taxes.
	F3 is the second most expensive alternative to build and the most costly in life
	cycle cost.
Design	The backtracking that most Ketchikan citizens would face if F3 was selected is
	stupid and unacceptable.
	Low bridge to Pennock – detrimental to ship travel, hurt tourism, would interfere
	with Native burial grounds.
Economic Impact	The effects to marine traffic from F3 seem too great, having potential negative
	impacts on the local economy.
	■ A bridge to Gravina simply doesn't make sense – 190 million dollars spent to a
	roadless, undeveloped, unpopulated area, with no water, sewers, or electricity.
	I oppose the bridge alternatives across the Tongass Narrows because of
	anticipated negative impacts on the economy, aviation safety, and expense to
	taxpayers. Although ferry options appear expensive, their costs can be adjusted in
	the future by management of schedules, staffing, contracting, and other business
	practices.
Favor F3	F3 will be an excellent addition to the community.
	The best bridge option to Gravina Island is via Pennock Island.
	F3 would connect the private lands surrounding Ketchikan. F3 will be an excellent addition to Ketchikan – jobs, transportation, and homes all
	close to our city core. Yes!  The Greater Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce expressed their desire for and
	acceptance of F3.  Although one of the most expensive alternatives, F3 gives the Ketchikan
	community the opportunity to expand.
	F3 is the best alternative to Gravina both aesthetically and practically.
	F3 is the most logical location for bridge spans to Gravina Island.
	F3 would provide road access to three islands, rather than just two.
	A bridge to Gravina by way of Pennock is very important to Ketchikan – for
	transportation means and to boost the community's deteriorating economy.
	The bridge would encourage development and growth to our community.
	We need this bridge! If a high bridge is not feasible from Ketchikan to Pennock,
	then F3 should be built. The cruise ship industry will have to adapt to the West
	Channel. Use a pilot boat to assist.
	F3 would work for the Ketchikan community. We need improved access to
	Gravina Island and increased availability of land for residential and commercial
	development. I believe that all parties should be heard and all concerns should be
	addressed but this community needs to move forward and look to our future.
	A bridge would give the community of Ketchikan better access – it would also
	supply many jobs. I like the F3 option.
	Build the bridge – we need the access to Gravina Island, we need the jobs, and we

Issue	Public Comments on Alternative F3
	need to look to our future.
	The Third Avenue by-pass is now under construction but after everything, it is
	near impossible to build, and will cost far more than a more realistic lower
	elevation route. Don't let the same thing happen with the hard link to the airport.
	The Pennock/two bridge connection is the only sensible route.
	F3 makes the most sense.
	The Greater Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce strongly concurs with a Pennock
	Island Crossing alignment for a bridge structure. In all regards, this alignment
	appears to best meet the community's needs and foster future access and growth
	on Pennock, Gravina, and Revilla Islands.
	F3 best meets the needs of the community and provides an avenue for future
	development on the islands of Pennock and Gravina.
	I recommend a Pennock Island crossing, particularly F3. With contingencies that if F3 proves too detrimental to the community and its future economy, then some
	form a high crossing on the East Channel should be included in the options.
	We heavily endorse the low-bridge version of F3. As a 34-year Ketchikan
	resident, and my husband 48 years, this project has been studied at least three
	times. It is time for a bridge to be built to Pennock and Gravina Islands.
	Please consider that the "nay" sayers may be more politically active and you may
	be hearing from a proportionally higher number of them. We believe they do not
	represent a majority opinion. Many who favor the bridge simply won't have the
	time or feel strongly enough to voice their opinion.
Native Issues	The F3 bridge will endanger the sacred sites and burial grounds of the local
	Native people and thus violate the rights of the Tlingit Nation.
Navigation &	Southeast Alaska Pilots' Association (SEAPA) has navigational and safety
Pilotage	concerns with F3. SEAPA supports improved access to Gravina Island, but does
	not support an option which obstructs the East Channel.
	The SouthEast Alaska Pilots' Association supports improved access to Gravina
	Island, but does not support F3.
	F3 severely limits the use of Tongass Narrows by large vessels and will delay all
	vessels due to added congestion caused by limited use of East Channel if a 60-
	foot vertical bridge clearance is not altered to accommodate the large vessels
	calling in Ketchikan and transiting through Tongass Narrows.
	As a towboat owner/operator with 27 years experience in Tongass Narrows, I am
	concerned F3 will create severe navigational restrictions from Mountain Point to
	Peninsula Point.  Increased difficulty of vessel maneuvers, the delays in ship arrivals and
	departures, and the reduced capacity of the port caused by F3 are very substantial.
	F3 creates a less efficient port in Ketchikan.
Planning & Project	How can the Pennock Island crossing alternative be used and not change the
Process/Progress	comprehensive plan which includes the Pennock/Gravina Neighbor plan. Three
110003/11051033	years of planning was put in to that and now with no input from the association,
	the plan would change.
	Organized Village of Saxman has drafted a resolution to reject F3: "To reject any
	bridge that will hinder the free flow of cruise ship traffic into the Ketchikan area"
	and to "call for a public vote by the people before any action is taken."
	The Southeast Alaska Conservation Council (SEACC) supports safe, efficient,

Issue	Public Comments on Alternative F3
	reliable, and cost-effective improvements to the transportation systems in Southeast Alaska – F3 fails to meet these and other reasonable criteria.  Too many unresolved issues related to cost, safety, and public process to allow the project to go forward. All it will take is an incident or two to shut down our visitor industry.  The Ketchikan Borough Assembly recognizes that additional EIS studies are to be carried out to better document the extent and seriousness of the following issues:  Increased navigational risk associated with restriction of travel on the east channel;  Economic costs associated with these risks (potential reduction in cruise ship stops and less time in port);  Loss of certain development opportunities for the City of Saxman caused by the low east channel bridge immediately north of that city; and  Increased traffic through the city core.  The Assembly urges DOT&PF to consider all possible improvements that will alleviate these issues once they are better understood. These improvements might include, but are not limited to, removal of navigational hazards to improve seagoing traffic; an increase in the height of the East Channel bridge to enable larger vessels to use that waterway; and street or routing improvements to reduce traffic congestion in the downtown.
Wetlands	Bridge will damage both wetlands and endanger what's left of the old growth stand and subsistence area around Bostick Bay.

Table 3. Public Comments Submitted on Reasonable Alternatives (January-April 2002)

Issue	Public Comments on All Reasonable Alternatives
Affected Environment	<ul> <li>How does building a bridge that proposes impacting over 86 acres of wetlands with 1,734,900 cubic meters of fill and seriously impacting essential fish habitat satisfy the NEPA policy (which declares a national policy will encourage productive and enjoyable harmony between man and his environment; to promote efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment and biosphere and stimulate the health and welfare of man; to enrich the understanding of the ecological systems and natural resources important to the Nation; and to establish a Council on Environmental Quality)?</li> <li>Gravina's deer population sustains black bears and a wolf pack. The island is a popular hunting and trapping place for area residents.</li> <li>The F3 bridge would fill over 86 acres of wetlands and affect 1.22 acres of essential fish habitat.</li> </ul>
Airport Access	<ul> <li>Most people want to get to wherever they are going FAST. The Pennock crossing adds more miles, time and gas dollars – a minimum of ½ hour – to access the airport.</li> <li>F3 puts more cars through the downtown where traffic moves slowly.</li> <li>If F3 was selected, three-quarters of Ketchikan's residents would experience costly and frustrating backtracking.</li> <li>The runway extension plans will put the new road under the runway.</li> <li>I don't see any good reason to build a bridge. It will not make the trip to the</li> </ul>

Issue	Public Comments on All Reasonable Alternatives
	airport any quicker for most people.
	Inconvenient airport access could be a major factor in turning people in favor of a
	bridge.
	The community needs a Park & Ride at both ends of town for the bus and for a
	water taxi. This would greatly reduce downtown congestion.
	• Would like DOT&PF to address the projected travel time from various locales,
	including road conditions (i.e. summer tourists downtown, and using a bridge in
	the wind, rain, and fog that dominate our weather) thus addressing efficiency.
	Addressing time is essential when taking transports into consideration.
	The bridge is being proposed as a matter of convenience. A much less costly
A	scenario than building a bridge is to revamp how luggage is handled.
Airport Parking	Don't want my car parked over on Gravina when out of town. Concern with
	having to pay for parking in the planned parking garage. This would be an extra and unwanted expense.
	No parking is currently available at the airport, so people will still have to ride
	some form of public transportation if the bridge is built.
	Where will the parking area be built? How far from the terminal?
	If a parking garage/area is to be located a significant distance from the terminal
	and a shuttle is needed, the public needs to be aware of this especially since the
	purpose and need is cost and convenience.
Bridge Design	How about a draw bridge in the East Channel? A draw bridge would cost more,
	but it would stop the complaint of navigation.
	Constructing one low bridge and one high bridge still allows for large ship
	passage and keeps the span closet to the air traffic low. The route across Pennock
	was chosen well in that both bridges are relatively short and it provides a high
	approach for the high bridge.
	The F3 bridge crossing point is not central to Ketchikan's population center, and
	will lengthen airport commute times for many residents. Traffic will be routed
	through the already congested downtown core, which supports heavy foot traffic
	during summer months.
	Move toward an alternative route on the north side of Ward Cove with highest possible clearance without interfering with incoming airport traffic, less
	environment impact, capable of supporting water, sewer, electrical and
	communication lines. This plan would help traffic congestion on land and water
	and is highly accessible to proposed electrical intertie, mainland accessibility and
	boost rather than hinder the economy of Ketchikan with opportunities for tourism,
	recreation, and industrial activities.
	North end bridges would hamper floatplane traffic.
	Bridges would change the unique character and charm of Ketchikan; and would
	be dangerous during fog and bad weather.
	<ul> <li>Should be wider than 40' to accommodate big trucks and further road expansion.</li> </ul>
	Residents of Pennock Island should have a ramp way on to the bridge to make it
	worth the inconvenience of having it near their property and water source.
	Bridges spans will need to have range lights and boards on them.
	• Will the bridge be designed to withstand 100 mph winds?
	Allowing 200 feet of vertical clearance for both the East and West Channel
(20) 1 1 1 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2	bridges would allow continued access to all of Ketchikan and Tongass Narrows

Public Comments on All Reasonable Alternatives
for most vessels.
<ul> <li>Sitka's bridge is beautiful and does not block the harbor.</li> <li>Juneau's bridge connects two settled areas.</li> <li>The first Juneau-Douglass bridge was a tall, structure that aircraft managed to miss during its existence. The old bridge withstood Taku winds and the winds coming off Mendenhall Glacier. With increasing maintenance needs, a wider bridge was built and opened in 1981. That was ten years after a request to build a bridge to Ketchikan's less-wind-affected airport on Gravina Island. Now the residents on the north end of Douglass Island want a third bridge to shorten trips to the airport, Fred Meyer, Costco and K-Mart.</li> <li>Compare Ketchikan to Norway – if Norwegians can replace a ferry with a bridge, they do. (Examples include: Raftsundetbrua, has a concrete cantilever design, similar to the proposed Gravina Access Project West Channel Bridge; Austevoll has two concrete cantilever bridges, the Stolmabrua [301 meters] and Storekalsoybrua)</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Cost Analysis</li> <li>The DOT&amp;PF's threshold for determining the viability of any alternative needs to reflect not only the construction and life-cycle costs of each project, but needs to reflect the net economic impact to the Ketchikan area for each alternative. The DOT&amp;PF analysis needs to examine not only a 25-year time horizon, but a 50-year time horizon as well.</li> <li>How accurate are the economic loss estimates under F3? Simulations need to be performed, as does a more comprehensive economic analysis, in order to more accurately define this impact.</li> <li>Positive</li> <li>The money spent on this project will provide a tangible, physical asset that the community will use for decades to come.</li> <li>If the federal government is willing to provide the funding for this project, we should take it.</li> <li>The proposed bridges will have a very high construction cost, but once completed the maintenance costs will be low, especially compared to operation of airport ferries.</li> <li>Ketchikan has waited years for its bridge – there is plenty of time to raise another \$50 million and build this bridge the right way: with two high spans on Pennock Island over the East and West Channels.</li> <li>Negative</li> <li>With vacant stores and declining school enrollment, how can the community afford to operate and maintain these bridges without high expense?</li> <li>Two high bridges don't seem to be cost effective.</li> <li>For the cost of \$190 million, we might as well move the airport to the Ketchikan side.</li> <li>Ketchikan taxpayers will also foot the bill for bridge maintenance, and building the 3.2 miles of new road to get from the bridge to the airport.</li> <li>Money should go towards state ferry system rather than bridge.</li> </ul>

Issue	Public Comments on All Reasonable Alternatives
	and school cafeterias.
	As a longtime resident of Ketchikan who came in 1946, I see no great benefit in a
	bridge at an excessive cost.
	The proposed bridge is a prime example of a fiscally irresponsible and completely
	unnecessary project. To build a \$190 million, mile-long bridge in place of
	existing, reliable airport ferry service is sheer waste.
	I believe the low level of development on Gravina Island does not justify a \$190
	million bridge, especially with the potential for increasing congestion in one of
	the busiest ports in the world.
	How can state officials claim a personal income tax is needed while
	recommending this sort of expenditure? (Alaskan's share of the bridge is \$34
	million, 20% of \$170 million)
Name of Street Control of Street, and the Stre	Bridges are too expensive – retain ferry service.
Cruise Industry	Creating an alternative route or delayed time to dock at the port would not make
	any difference in port-time for the ships. Oftentimes the cruise ships are going
	circles or going very slowly in the channel, waiting for daylight or the proper time
	to approach and come into Ketchikan.
	Cruise ships do not have to dock in the downtown area. Ward Cove could be
	developed into an alternative site for Cruise Ships to dock  Cruise ship companies will avoid Ketchikan because cruise ship captains will
	convey to their companies their inevitable fears of hazards to navigation to such
	large vessels being forced to take the West Channel.
	I am in support of a hard-link to Gravina. However, I want to make certain that
	the cruise industry and sea pilots feel that the DOT&PF's recommended
	alternative will not hinder traffic or cause a loss in one growth industry.
	Large vessels avoiding the port because of a low bridge will mean fewer
	passengers in Ketchikan resulting from fewer large vessel port calls.
East Channel of	The East Channel bridge for F3, as described in the draft Alternatives Evaluation
Tongass Narrows	- Summary Report, would close the Tongass Narrows East Channel to National
Toligass Tullows	Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) vessels, not to mention other
	large vessel commercial traffic. This closure will lead to increased maneuvering
	as northbound vessels make for the city pier, USCG pier, and the proposed
	NOAA pier, further delaying vessels transiting through the narrows. From a
	mariner's perspective, restricting vessel access in East Channel is not ideal.
	(NOAA – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration)
	Obstructing the East Channel will significantly increase the risks associated with
	maneuvering in the harbor.
	Closing the East Channel will impede safe transit of large vessels by reducing all
	vessels to a single point of transit, a no passing zone. The West Channel is a blind
	passage from main docking facilities in Ketchikan and will not provide for visual
	clearance prior to committing large vessels to transiting.
	The span across the East Channel must have a 200' clearance to accommodate
	large vessels.
	The bridge should be high span rather than low span.
	East Channel affords more room and lighter currents.
	East Channel should never be sacrificed with a low vertical bridge clearance, as it
	is a primary route on the Inside Passage to points north.

Issue	Public Comments on All Reasonable Alternatives
	<ul> <li>Larger cruise ships will refuse to enter the narrow channel on windy days and possibly bypass Ketchikan altogether.</li> </ul>
Economic impact	<ul> <li>There still aren't enough people showing interest in how this project will affect the Ketchikan community – the long-term consequences of building a low span over the East Channel would be catastrophic.</li> <li>The community has been subject to the constraints of a ferry alternative for the last 25 years – DOT&amp;PF's document states "a high level of economic growth on Gravina Island is not likely with a ferry alternative, but possible with a bridge</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>alternative."</li> <li>The economic studies conducted thus far have been detrimental to the overall success of the recommended crossing. The impact conclusions are speculative, inconclusive and misleading. Clearly there has been more than adequate time for in-depth research in this area in the more than 18 months you have had to arrive at this juncture of the process. It is with bitter disappointment that I ask to see a more in-depth study of socio-economic impacts/benefits to the community, in the draft, with complimentary projects and plans taken into account.</li> <li>The socio-economic impact to this community will be huge – I am in strong</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>opposition to any build alternative.</li> <li>The DOT&amp;PF placed less importance on the overall economic impact to the Ketchikan area of each alternative, than it placed on the relative costs of development of each alternative.</li> </ul>
	The socio-economic impact to this community will be huge if a bridge is built. The negative impact on the tourism as well as surface navigational and aviation safety hazards are well documented. Add to the idiocy of building a bridge that most of the Gravina residents do not want, in the hopes of luring industry that Revilla residents do not want (i.e. private prison) and it gives us plenty of reason to cancel any plans to construct a bridge.
	<ul> <li>The real growth industry in Ketchikan is the cruise ship/tourist industry, and anything that impacts that business in a negative way is bad for Ketchikan.</li> <li>Ketchikan has consistently been a maritime community and needs support for ferries and maritime jobs because those are the skills currently in the population.</li> <li>Access to the Ketchikan port is of utmost importance.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Any downsizing of the waterways that compromise the Ketchikan port will likely precipitate a corresponding downsizing of its existing economy.</li> <li>Ketchikan is an economically depressed area that is currently struggling to cope with the cost and facilities for such basics as sewer disposal, solid waste disposal, enough electricity, road maintenance, and more – we shouldn't be considering adding to these burdens on the basis the availability of "pork barrel" money.</li> </ul>
Ferry Access to Airport	<ul> <li>Current ferry access is adequate and superior to any bridge alternative.</li> <li>The ferry crossing is interesting and different. Baggage is the only difficulty.</li> <li>To make luggage handling more convenient, Ketchikan should provide luggage trucks at the top of the ramp, similar to how the Alaska Marine Highway manages foot traffic luggage.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Improving and streamlining how the ferry system operates, such as tollbooth bottlenecks and invalid return trip tickets, would ease the passage and also the outcry for a bridge.</li> <li>Ferry operations do not pose substantial risks to aviation safety or operations.</li> </ul>

Issue	Public Comments on All Reasonable Alternatives
	<ul> <li>Ferry alternatives provide the best opportunities for sustained economic growth in this community that depends upon tourism, aviation transportation by floatplanes, ship yard business for repair and maintenance of the ferry, and regular maritime operations (including full-time employment for ferry personnel).</li> <li>It has always amazed me that the Borough has done so little to make the ferry service convenient. Having a better system for passenger luggage would be a good place to start. Improvements in luggage services are likely far less expensive than building a bridge.</li> <li>The flexibility available to do north-of-the-airport and south-of-the-airport ferry stops, plus a Pennock Island stop if that were desirable, makes improved ferry service a clear first choice.</li> <li>We could have the same direct-across-the-channel-route that we have now, and a second, harbor tour route with stops on Pennock Island, downtown, north or south Gravina or wherever else we wish. It could be an attraction rather than a liability. It could complement rather than compete with larger ships and floatplanes. It could steadily employ local people throughout its business cycle. Almost all of the ferry dollars would be locally spent, a distinction shared by none of the other alternatives.</li> <li>The advantages of improved ferry access to Gravina is avoidance of the disadvantages of any of the bridge options.</li> <li>I support increased access to Gravina Island from Ketchikan by means of improved ferry service rather than by a bridge.</li> <li>My preferred alternative is no bridge – use ferries only.</li> <li>If bridges are built, retain a ferry service for "walk-on" travelers who don't want</li> </ul>
the name with the state of the	to drive to the airport.
Floatplane Traffic	<ul> <li>The proposed bridges will impede safe flight through the Narrows.</li> <li>As an air taxi operator, I view the bridge to be a serious hazard to flight operations in the Ketchikan Harbor. Seaplane flight operations in the harbor are congested already as we share the harbor with cruise ships, tugs, barges, fishing vessel, charter boat operators, sailboats, skiffs, etc.</li> <li>Due to expected negative impacts on aviation operations (specifically Special VFR Clearances for floatplanes during low ceilings and limited visibility), F3 is not acceptable. This problem exists for all bridge alternatives examined.</li> <li>The downtown floatplane traffic will be very restricted in departing and landing in marginal VFR flight conditions with additional obstacles to circumnavigate.</li> <li>The weather conditions for flying in southeast Alaska are marginal anyway without adding another obstruction (a bridge).</li> <li>Building a high bridge in Ketchikan is problematic, with Ketchikan being the first</li> </ul>
Job Creation	<ul> <li>Building a high bridge in Receinkair is problematic, with Receinkair being the first or second in floatplane traffic in the world.</li> <li>Building a bridge will endanger the flying public – no matter where you put a bridge, it will be in the flight path of small aircraft.</li> <li>Improved ferry service would provide many meaningful jobs. More ferries and more ferry terminals (one downtown or at the south end for example). This would also help drivers avoid the downtown traffic.</li> <li>I don't know of any bridge builders in Ketchikan.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Building the bridge would create jobs in the Ketchikan area.</li> <li>The bridge will be a construction boom the likes of which Ketchikan has never</li> </ul>

Issue	Public Comments on All Reasonable Alternatives
	<ul> <li>seen. People presently living in Ketchikan can do almost none of the work for a project of this magnitude. The likelihood that construction folks will bring their families here and settle is very low.</li> <li>Not very many of the salary dollars will end up staying in Ketchikan. Even maintaining a bridge will probably require expertise not available here.</li> <li>A strong development plan should be in place for retaining workers once they've finished building the bridge so they will stay in the community and build other things (i.e. golf course, shopping centers, industrial buildings, and housing developments).</li> <li>Hire locals first.</li> <li>Local labor could be used in construction; development of Gravina would create jobs.</li> </ul>
	But higher paying jobs will go to those from outside the area with experience.
Land Development	<ul> <li>Would provide long-term benefits by opening up new building opportunities, too much of the land is tied up in National Forest which limits building options.</li> <li>The Forest Service wants to log 40 mmbf and build up to 22 miles of new road from central and south Gravina Island in an entirely roadless sale.</li> <li>The nearby Native villages of Saxman and Metlakatla strongly oppose the timber sale because it will disrupt their traditional, cultural and subsistence uses of the island.</li> <li>Gravina would have great vehicle type recreational opportunities, but the possibility of implementation of "the Roadless Rule" is very realistic. Why not use the money to construct the tie road from Revilla Road to the Shelter Cove road system? This would open up a large area for all of us to enjoy without compromising our beautiful waterfront.</li> <li>Ketchikan community needs more land development.</li> <li>F3 Alternative will open up land.</li> <li>There is nowhere to build – the no action alternative is not an option.</li> <li>Access to Gravina Island will open up many areas for fishing, hiking, and</li> </ul>
***************************************	sightseeing.
Maintenance	<ul> <li>The proposed bridges will have a very high construction cost, but once completed the maintenance costs will be low, especially compared to operation of the airport ferries.</li> <li>Where will the money come from to maintain the bridge?</li> <li>Locals will have to pay for road/bridge maintenance.</li> <li>Ferry services are cheaper to maintain than bridges.</li> </ul>
Native Issues	<ul> <li>Pennock Island is Tribal Burial ground. Building of new homes on Pennock Island will further desecrate our Indian graves. I see two centuries of exploitation of all our natural resources and land being stolen.</li> <li>Pennock Island was and still is Tribal Burial grounds for the Tanda Kwaan (Tongass Tribe) and Saanya Kwaan (Cape Fox people). Pennock Island's graveyard starts from the southern tip to the northern tip of the island on the Ketchikan side.</li> </ul>
Navigation	<ul> <li>Traffic Management</li> <li>If the Coast Guard and cruise ship industry are concerned about safety of ship traffic, they should consider the creation of a vessel traffic safety system in Ketchikan (similar to the ones in use at major ports such as Seattle and San</li> </ul>

Issue	Public Comments on All Reasonable Alternatives
	Francisco). With a VTS System in place, ship traffic would be regulated and would most likely be just as safe as it is right now.  Ketchikan Harbor is one of the most, if not the most congested harbors in Alaska.  Blocking off some access to the harbor by putting in a bridge will reduce the working waterfront of Ketchikan by creating congestion, especially from huge cruise ships turning around in the channel. Someone will have to monitor the turn zone, ships will have to take turns, and ships will have to allow for additional time
	<ul> <li>to perform this maneuver. All this will cost money.</li> <li>If the West Channel is the only navigational channel, the flow of maritime traffic will be greatly altered and made much more difficult for those who handle ships.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Scheduled delays will occur to await the passage of other vessels to clear the West Channel. The waits could be a long time if waiting on a cruise ship or a tug pulling a barge.</li> </ul>
	• Greater potential for a collision with another vessel in the West Channel.
·	<ul> <li>The Gravina Access Project Monte Carlo Navigation Simulation describes a greater risk in West Channel than East Channel by 24%.</li> </ul>
	In an earlier safety study the U.S. Coast Guard identified Tongass Narrows as
	having the highest risk of any waterway in Southeast Alaska due to water congestion.
	To substitute a secondary channel for a primary channel with increased risk and
	congestion is a crippling blow to maritime commerce transiting Tongass Narrows.
	The natural bifurcation of East and West Channels of Tongass Narrows has always provided for orderly arrival/departure and for through traffic of Tongass Narrows by all waterway users.
	The Tongass Narrows is the busiest commercial waterway in Southeast Alaska.
	F3 severely limits the use of Tongass Narrows by large vessels and will delay all vessels due to added congestion caused by limited use of East Channel if a 60' vertical bridge clearance is not altered to accommodate the large vessels.
	Pilotage
	<ul> <li>Building low or high bridges across the Tongass Narrows presents considerable safety concerns to seaplane pilots and their passengers. Low ceilings and poor</li> </ul>
A STATE OF THE STA	visibilities are a continual challenge to navigation.
	<ul> <li>Heavy rain, snow, fog and turbulent winds would make safe flight over bridges difficult.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Maneuvering times will be increased, as all ships will be forced to turn around on</li> </ul>
	arrival or departure. Ketchikan harbor would become a cul-de-sac port as the open accessibility from either end is sacrificed.
	Any vessel using the West Channel and destined to moor at the Ketchikan berth 1
	or 2 will require several major maneuvers while in extremely confined waters.
	<ul> <li>Project contractors found that the bridge will make cruise ship maneuvers risky</li> </ul>
	and inconvenient to city docks. The bridge will force ships to thread through a
	narrow, tide-whipped passage with rocks near the water surface – a route which
	ship masters and captains say is too dangerous to use regularly.
	I see most of the negative comments coming from the sea pilots. Is it because they
	get paid by the trip and not the hour that concerns them about it taking longer to the dock? Or is this really a dangerous recommendation to build F3?
	If access to the port is not convenient, and becomes more risky for vessels, the

Issue	Public Comments on All Reasonable Alternatives
	port will experience fewer calls from large vessels.  West Channel is deep, but narrow. There is only enough room for one vessel at a time. Once you are committed to the West Channel, you cannot turn around if north of the narrows.
	• West Channel current is substantial, especially during spring.
	<ul> <li>There is more debris in the West Channel.</li> <li>Safety and efficiency are critical in the approaches to the downtown berths for cruise ships which are now mostly in the 800 to 975-foot range and cannot easily be turned around in front of the berths.</li> </ul>
	F3 introduces need for all ships to turn around in front of their city-front berths, either on arrival or departure. This changes the area used as an anchorage East of Pennock Reef into a turning basin for approach to or from the West Channel. This would mostly eliminate that portion of port capacity represented by anchored ships.
No-Action	The needs of the area business owners, residents, and Gravina users are already being met by the present transportation system.
Alternative	Don't see an economic need to build bridges at this time or the near future.
	The best bridge from Ketchikan across the Tongass Narrows is no bridge at all.
	The Gravina Access Project involving a bridge creates more problems than it
	solves, is not efficient, convenient, and cost-effective way to access the airport, is not how the state should spend scarce funds, and is not what Ketchikan needs.  It's not worth \$190 million for a bridge to an airport that sees a daily maximum of
	1,000 passengers, when Ketchikan already has a fast, efficient and reliable ferry system in place.
	The no-action alternative should not be considered. The Ketchikan community has significant infrastructure and lands on Gravina Island that cannot begin to realize their potential.
	Other than driving to the airport, there would be very little gained for the general public with a bridge, unless they just want another road to dump their garbage along. We are opposed to any bridge option.
	I have read through some of the technical reports on line, and nothing I have heard or read has convinced me that building a bridge is justifiable for any reason other then short term economic benefit from the construction jobs.
Opening Land on Gravina	Building the original high land bypass on the Revilla side would serve the purpose of opening up land, providing a way around the town for emergencies, construction detours, and an alternative for those who wish to avoid downtown. Thus, land on Gravina would not need to be "opened up."
	Have hiked and camped on Gravina Island – it is a rare jewel that should be
	preserved as wilderness as much as possible.
	Strongly in favor of Gravina Island roads, and recommend that the DOT focus on helping the Borough get through the regulatory maze of building the road from the airport to Lewis Reef. Also a road could be built south of the airport to open up further waterfront property for industrial development if and when the demand occurs. The DOT could assist with a Gravina Island barge transfer facility, for transporting bulk goods, as well as beefing up the existing ferry service.
	Hard link access would open Gravina land to various uses.
	Gravina Island has much to offer for future development, wildlife viewing,

Issue	Public Comments on All Reasonable Alternatives
	recreation opportunities, and avenues for job creation.
Other Alternatives	<ul> <li>Bridge</li> <li>The DOT&amp;PF should focus on a high span over the East Channel as the number one priority of the whole project. Everything else (like a parking garage) should take second place.</li> <li>A high bridge crossing at C3 that disrupts the airspace of the airport is unrealistic. The footprint of this bridge option is disturbing – too much of it exists in the waters along the Gravina Island shoreline. The sharp curve on the alignment coupled with the prevailing winds in the area do not speak well for large/tall vehicles carrying cargo loads across the bridge.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>F1 addresses aviation concerns and marine concerns.</li> <li>F1 is acceptable to the marine community, but not to the aviation community.</li> <li>Ferry</li> <li>Ferry route alternatives G-2, G-3, and G-4 have the least impact on Tongass</li> </ul>
	Narrows.  The three ferry alternatives G4, G3, G2, and alternatives C3(a) and C4 all preserve the harbor and the East Channel for large ships, and have the fewest impacts to the aviation community as well.
	<ul> <li>I am strongly supportive of increased access to Gravina Island from Ketchikan. If we are to build a bridge, I support F3. But I do not believe that a bridge to Gravina is in Ketchikan's best interests for many years to come. An improved ferry access option is the best alternative for Ketchikan for the foreseeable future. With a brand new ferry, keeping the present ferry and terminal does not seem like a wasteful option or "no action."</li> <li>I support the G4 alternative of improved ferry service near the existing site. I am</li> </ul>
	opposed to the bridge alternatives for several reasons.  Underwater Tunnel  Recommend underwater tunnel. Tunnels will not impede cruise ships nor would they interfere with boats traveling up and down the Tongass Narrows.
	Other Options Instead of building bridges, pave the road to the power station in the south and to the Waterfall community and Settler's Cove in the north. The Tongass Highway can certainly be upgraded for a lot less than a bridge.
	A Gravina crossing, whether in the vicinity of Pennock Island or elsewhere, should not constrict the free flow of commerce that presently exists. If it is to be a bridge, it should be high enough and wide enough for the largest vessels presently using each of the channels of Tongass Narrows. The minimum air draft clearances should be 200' in the East Channel and 150' in the West Channel.
Pennock Island	<ul> <li>Concern that the proposed two-bridge crossing would provide no access to land on Pennock.</li> <li>As a Pennock Island resident, I see my pre-bridge lifestyle going out the window.</li> <li>As an owner of a guided sea kayaking company that does kayaking trips in the Tongass Narrows, a bridge would take away from the aesthetic qualities of this tour. Also, as a resident of Pennock Island, I live there for its rural lifestyle, and a bridge to Pennock Island would destroy this lifestyle.</li> <li>F3 shows a great deal of disrespect for the Pennock residents and the unique</li> </ul>

Issue	Public Comments on All Reasonable Alternatives
	lifestyle they elect to enjoy. I have not heard a single Pennock resident support this route for a bridge.
Project Progress	<ul> <li>A project office should be established in Ketchikan immediately, and staffed with knowledgeable local personnel. The office should be visible and accessible to all. Currently the locale for materials is inadequate, and staffed by people who have a business to run, and little time to concentrate on this project. You are mandated by the NEPA process to give equal time to all the alternatives, regardless of which one you prefer.</li> <li>"The problem with Ketchikan is we squander many opportunities because of our inability to form a consensus of opinion."</li> <li>The Greater Ketchikan Chamber of Commerce urges the DOT&amp;PF to also further consider the F1 alternative with the High Low Pennock Island Bridge. It is important the DOT&amp;PF to prove that the initial costs associated with the F1 alternative are not justified by the annual and long term impacts to the community, both social and economic. The Chamber also believes that the F3 alternative should move forward at this time. Concurrent with this effort, the F1 alternative should be further investigated so that the community can rightly weigh the costs and benefits of transit through the East and West Channels. The simulation effort at the end of April with the NW Cruise Association is one example of information gathering for both options that needs to occur.</li> <li>Without being detrimental to the overall project, I would like to see F1, High/Low Pennock Island Crossing advanced far enough and quickly enough that if impacts from F3 are deemed too costly to the community, then F1 would be the next consideration, or some form of mixture between F1 and F3. I am concerned that if this option (F1) is not further studied, it may become a major issue for SEIS discussion later in the process. That kind of delay is something both Ketchikan and DOT&amp;PF wish to avoid.</li> </ul>
Toll	No toll should be instated.
Vote	The split is about 50/50, and I will continue to encourage the Assembly to schedule a vote, so that a true reading of the public sentiment on this project can be obtained.

Via E-MAIL

12810 Snowberry Lane North Ketchikan, AK 99901

March 27, 2002

Roger Healy, P.E.
Engineering Manager
State of Alaska
Dept. of Transportation and PF
Statewide Design & ES
Southeast Region Preconstruction
6860 Glacier Highway
Juneau, AK 99801-7999

Dear Mr. Healy:

I write to you as a citizen of Ketchikan, and as a vessel operator with experience in Tongass Narrows, and not as a representative of the Alaska Marine Highway System.

I am in receipt of your comparison charts of Tongass Narrows and Ketchikan's harbor with various ports and harbors of the Caribbean, Hawaii, and Vancouver, B.C. Thank you for all the information. It is well presented.

I do object to belittling the risk estimate that the Monte Carlo computer simulations show. These simulations show an increase in risk of "only 25% higher" by using the West Channel of Tongass Narrows over the East Channel of Tongass Narrows. If my math is correct, this is an increased risk of one out of every four times. The name "Monte Carlo" honors the European city where games of chance are played. It is easy to say "only 25% higher". It I have an accident, I can loose my marine license, my reputation, and my career. On the other hand, if you have a bad day, you do not loose your P.E. credentials and simply go back to the drawing board. Try to understand my perspective and the gravity of the situation for a vessel operator.

I base my concerns on my experience, not on Monte Carlo computer simulations. I can remember three times I have fought to get off the Pennock Island shore with the Aurora, 235 feet long. I have also had one such event in the West Channel with the Kennicott, 382 feet long. I only extrapolate those events to a larger vessel, 600 feet long, 800 feet long or 1000 feet long.

As a shipmaster, I think of the wind shifts to the southwest when storm fronts pass overhead, move inland, and apply that to the West Channel. I think of fog; I think of heavy snow or rain; I think of vessel traffic congestion; I think of tidal currents during times of spring tide; I think of bank cushion and bank suction; I think of current and wind set. Our weather, and therefore our operating conditions, is harsher than the Caribbean and Hawaii.

The chart of Tongass Narrows that you sent shows large vessels in the West Channel at Pennock Island Light #4 and in the Eastern Channel between Idaho Rock Buoy and California Rock Buoy. The water displaced by the vessel in the East Channel can flow around Idaho Rock and California Rock. In the West Channel, the bank of Pennock Island and Gravina Island confines the water. The East Channel is superior for larger vessels, and safer. It is the main channel and has been in use as a navigable waterway for well over 100 years.

In your publication, Gravina Access Project Alternatives Evaluation Summary Report Draft, it is stated on page 1, bottom of the third paragraph, "The *eight reasonuble build* alternatives for the Gravina Access Project are shown in Figure 2".

The three ferry alternatives G4, G3, G2, and alternatives C3(a) and C4 all preserve the harbor and the East Channel for large ships, and have the fewest impacts to the aviation community as well. These alternatives preserve the East Channel for our use and still provide access to Gravina Island. Alternative F1 is acceptable to the marine community, but not to the aviation community.

Congressman Don Young was in Ketchikan last week speaking to the Chamber of Commerce. He emphatically stated that there is no cap on the amount of money to be used for this project.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Captain William M. Hopkins

Cc. James Helfinstine, U.S. Coast Guard Chief, Bridge Section, Waterways Management & Navigation Safety Branch

Captain Dale Collins, President Southeastern Alaska Pilot's Association

Governor Tony Knowles Governor State of Alaska

# KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH letterhead

support for a bridge to Gravina Island and, specifically, for a Pennock Island crossing. The purpose of this letter is to confirm the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly's

In recent weeks, there has been considerable public discussion regarding DOTPF's recommended alternative as well as all remaining alternatives under sindy. The benefits and impacts of each alternative are now becoming better understood. In further consideration of new information, the Borough Assembly has found that a Pennock prossing is the most desirable for numerous reasons:

- meets the project's purpose and need;
- provides more convenient and reliable access to Gravina than the ferry alternatives;
- more safely accommodates float plane traffic than bridge alternatives near the airport; allows passage of major cruise ships thereby maintaining this important industry;
  - does not penetrate the airport's protected air space;
- produces less impact to airport facilities and operations than other bridge alternatives; presents less technically challenging structures than other bridge alternatives; and
  - presents less visibly intrusive structures than other bridge alternatives.

Several issues associated with the recommended alternative (F-3) have been raised. These include:

- increased navigational risk associated with restriction of travel on the east channel;
- economic costs associated with these risks (potential reduction in crulse ship stops and less time in port);
  - loss of certain development opportunities for the City of Saxman caused by the low cast channel bridge immediately north of that city; and
    - increased traffic through the city core,

better document the extent and seriousness of these issues. The Assembly urges DOTPF to consider all possible improvements that will alleviate these issues once they are better understood. These improvements might include, but are not limited to, removal of navigational hazards to improve sea-going traffic; an increase in the height of the east channel bridge to enable larger vessels to use that waterway; and street or routing improvements to reduce traffic congestion in the downtown. The Borough Assembly recognizes that additional EIS studies are to be carried out to

We appreciate your steadfast support of our community's efforts to realize our long-held objective to improve access to Gravina Island.

Interim Borough Manager Gary Paxton

## ORGANIZED VILLAGE OF SAXMAN Saxman I.R.A. Council Route 2, Box 2 - Saxman; Ketchikan, Alaska 99901 Phone (907) 247-2502 / FAX (907) 247-2504

March 14, 200

Mark Dalton, Project Manager HDR Alaska, Inc. 742 W. 12th Street Juneau, Alaska 99801

Roger Healy DOT&PF Project Manager 6860 Glacier Highway Juneau, Alaska 99801 Dear Mr. Dalton and Mr. Healy,

Faxed this day is the Saxman I.R.A. Council's Resolution # 02-03-45 regarding the Gravina Access Project, which was passed and approved by a duly constituted quorum of the Saxman I.R.A. Council on March 14, 2002.

Thank you for offering a comment period to our government. We do hope that you take our considerations to heart, and that you grasp the seriousness and earnest choice our community has resolved to.

Soe Williams II

President

Sincerely,

Attachment

## ORGANIZED VILLAGE OF SAXMAN Saxman I.R.A. Council Route 2, Box 2 - Saxman; Ketchikan, Alaska 99901 Phone (907) 247-2502 / Fax (907) 247 - 2504

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## **RESOLUTION # 02-03-45**

A RESOLUTION FOR THE ORGANIZED VILLAGE OF SAXMAN BY THE SAXMAN I.R.A. COUNCIL TO REJECT ALTERNATIVE F3 AS THE RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE DESCRIBED IN THE "GRAVINA ACCESS PROJECT ALTERNATIVE EVALUATION" REFERENCE DOCUMENT: TO REJECT ANY BRIDGE THAT WILL HINDER THE FREE FLOW OF CRUISE SHIP TRAFFIC INTO THE KETCHIKAN AREA; TO CALL FOR A PUBLIC VOTE BY THE PEOPLE BEFONE ANY ACTION IS TAKEN BY THE STATE OR THE KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH TO PROCEED WITH ANY PLANS TO ACCESS GRAVINA ISLAND AND I OR PENNOCK ISLAND FOR ACCESS TO THE KETCHIKAN AIRPORT FACILITY.

WHEREAS, The Organized Village of Saxman is a duly constituted Indian Tribe organized pursuant to the authority of the United States Congress by the Indian Reorganization Act, and such legislation of June 8, 1934 as the Tribe's governing body; and

WHEREAS, The Saxman I.R.A. Council is authorized by the Organized Village of Saxman Constitution and Bylaws approved on October 18, 1940 by the Secretary of Interior, and ratified on January 14, 1994 as the Tribe's governing body; and

WHEREAS, The Organized Village of Saxman being the federally recognized Tribe is governed by the Saxman I.R.A. Council who has the authority to represent and to act in all matters that concern the health, education, and welfare of the Native people who reside in the Village of Saxman; and

WHEREAS, HDR Alaska Inc. through the direction of the Alaska Department of Transportation and Port Facilities have drafted the "Gravina Access Project Alternative Evaluation" reference document for public review; and

WHEREAS, The Saxman I.R.A. Council has reviewed this document, has attended numerous meetings, and are concerned with the impact that the bridge described as Alternative F3 will have on Saxman's economy, development, and growth; and

WHEREAS, The Saxman I.R.A. Council advised that tourism is the major industry for the Village and City of Saxman, and provides enjoyment for the major work force of Saxman tribal members and residents, and provides for 53% of the municipal budget, and provides for the continued incentives for local artist to produce their arts and crafts; and

WHEREAS, The Saxman I.R.A. Council acknowledges that the bridge will create a situation where the cruise ships will not have a clear path through the channel, but will in fact, have to turn around in the channel, and at times will be placed in a dangerous situation that may hinder cruise vessels from docking in Ketchikan; and

- WHEREAS, Any cancellation, no matter, how small will have a dramatic effect on the number of visitors that come to Saxman and cannot be compromised in any way; and
- WHEREAS, The "Gravina Access Project Alternative Evaluation" reference document states that this will create an approximate loss of ten million dollars per year, and
- WHEREAS, The Saxman I.R.A. Council advises that viewing Saxman as the cruise ships go by on the east channel is a selling point to the Saxman Village Tour and a critical element to entice visitors to Saxman; and
- contain simulation, data and information to effectively assess the true impact of the loss, endangerment to ship groundings, and property and life damage, and do not WHEREAS, The Saxman I.R.A. Council acknowledges the studies and findings provided to the Tribe do not adequately reflect the insufficiencies or failings to environmental Alternatives.
- THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, The Saxman I.R.A. Council does hereby reject Alternative F3 as the recommended Alternative described in the "Gravina" Access Project Allemative Evaluation" reference document; and
- bridge that will hinder the free flow of cruise ship traffic into the Ketchikan area; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, The Saxman I.R.A. Council does further reject any
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, The Saxman I.R.A. Council does hereby call for a public Borough to proceed with any plans to access Gravina Island and / or Pennock Island vote by the people before any action is taken by the State or Ketchikan Gateway for the purposes of accessing the Ketchikan Airport Facility; and
- position that the Organized Village of Saxman is against the bridge, but encumbantly BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT, The Saxman I.R.A. Council does not in anyway take the information, studies, and simulations to review a high bridge on the east channel urges DOT&PF to take whatever steps are necessary to prepare the necessary with the high bridge on the west channel or a high bridge hard link directly to Gravina Island.

CERTIFICATION:

PASSED and APPROVED by a duly sonstituted quorum of the Saxman I.R.A. Council on the fourteenth day of March 2002

ATTESTED

Se Williams II, Saxman I.R.A. Council Presiden

3/15/62

Nora DeWitt, Saxman I.R.A. Council Secretary



March 6, 2002

## To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this memo is to provide additional discussion, primarily from an economic standpoint, of the State of Alaska Department of Transportation (DOT) Gravina Access Alternatives Evaluation, dated January 2005, and to make specific recommendations as to how the DOT study might be further refined. It is hoped that this memo will prove to be helpful to the DOT, as well as to Ketchikan's leadership in making decisions that are to be based on the DOT study.

The DOT study, while an excellent starting point, needs to be further refined before it can serve as a document upon which any significant decision should be made. I would urge all community leaders to collectively assert their influence on the State to ensure that the following information be considered by the DOT in the context of its report, and that the DOT do so within a rigidly prescribed timeframe to ensure that the project is not placed in jeopardy due to timing considerations.

A key component of the DOT study is its derivation and comparison of the Net Present Values (NPV) of each alternative. NPV is derived by noting all of the known economic benefits and costs of each alternative over a specified period of time, backing them down to their respective present values at a reasonable rate of interest, and netting the results to determine the overall net economic impact of each alternative in present terms. As contained the DOT report, the NPV of the most attractive bridge alternatives are as follows:

- The (NPV) of alternative C3(a) is \$120M; The NPV of alternative C4 is \$127M.
- The NPV of alternative FI, although not addressed in the study, can be assumed to be at least \$120M, as its attributes relative to economic impact are virtually the same as C3(a) and C4 (assuming comparable construction costs).
  - The NPV of alternative F3 is \$84M (assuming the "base case" economic loss to the marine industry of \$4.8M per annum, which exist under the F3 alternative only).

Based on the above information it would appear at first glance that the economic impact to the community of any of the above alternatives would be favorable, and therefore making distinctions between them on an economic basis may not be as critical as doing so based on other factors. However, the following caveats should be noted and reflected in the DOT study in order that the report present a more accurate depiction of the above alternatives from the perspective of their economic impact to the Ketchikan area, particularly on a risk-adjusted basis. When the data contained in the report are examined and presented in a more comprehensive fashion, the dramatic differences in economic impact between the above alternatives become more readily

P. G. Box 8558 • Ketchikan, Alaska 99901 Tel: (907) 225-5163 • Fax: (907) 225-3137

Note: Based on the above information contained in the DOT study, construction costs of either F1, C3(a) or C4 could theoretically be \$35M more than the construction cost of F3, for the community to be equally well off economically, regardless of which of the four alternatives is selected. (Not including the enhanced economic stimulus of a higher-cost project). This fact alone is a startling observation, and contrasts sharply with the DOT's recommendation of F13 alternative. In addition however, the above NPV figures assume the "base case" economic loss to the marine industry under the F3 alternative of \$4.8M por year. Using the DOT's "worst case" scenario of an \$11M loss per year, the construction costs of F1, C3(a) or C4 could theoretically be \$76M more than the construction cost of F3, for the community to be equally well off economically. Further, whon applying DOT's worst case economic scenario, the NPV for the F3 alternative is reduced from the \$84M stated above to approximately only \$44M. Additional sensitivity analysis would reveal the amount of loss to the marine industry that would result in a zero Net Present Value to the community for the F3 alternative.

Note: The above NPV calculations were based on a 25-year time horizon. Beyond 25 years, the relative economic losses of F3 would continue for the entire life of the bridge, while the longer-term economic benefits of any bridge would be practically the same under any of the above alternatives. Therefore, using only 25 years as the time horizon for analysis effectively underestimates further the attractiveness to the community of the C3(a), C4 and F1 alternatives relative to the F3 alternative, as the F3 adternative of the only alternative of the four that would generate economic losses offsetting the economic benefits of a bridge.

Note: It also is clear that if a 50-year time horizon is applied, the NPV of alternative F3 would be even less favorable than stated above, as the relative economic costs associated with this alternative would continue long after the short term economic benefits from its construction have been fully realized and have abated. The time period between the initial burst of economic activity stemming from bridge construction and the point in time at which the longer-term economic benefits of opening Gravita island to spinit in time at which the longer-term economic benefits of opening Gravita island to point in time at which the longer-term as are the magnitude and sources of such future economic development. This is particularly apparent when one considers the existing abundance of accessible, yet undeveloped lands on the Ketchikan side of the proposed bridge. Due to the nebulous nature of these long-term benefits, it is difficult if not impossible to accurately quantify them for purposes of this analysis. Any attempt to do so would be impundent, and for this reason such economic benefits were correctly omitted from the DOT analysis.

There is no question that the community is economically better off under alternatives F1, C3(a) or C4, vs. under the F3 alternative. This is not an issue of fact, as the DOT study clearly supports this conclusion. C3(a) and C4 were rejected by the State as recommended alternatives due to a probability of higher-than-anticipated construction costs, as well as the perceived difficulty in obtaining FAA approval for these alternatives. The visual impacts of C3(a) and C4 were also noted as a concern. These concerns may be valid. However, alternative F1 was eliminated from consideration altogether only because of the anticipation of higher construction costs associated with this alternative. The other attributes of F1 are very much the same as those of the DOT's recommended F3 alternative.

Therefore, it is clear that in making its recommendation, the State placed less importance on the overall economic impact to the Ketchikan area of each alternative, than it placed on the relative costs of development of each alternative. This bias is particularly acute when comparing the discarded F1 alternative the much-less favorable F3 alternative. The study falls short in this regard, because it ignores other options for financing the additional development costs of the F1 alternative in particular that Ketchikan may well decide are worth pursuing.

Another question therefore arises, which a refined DOT study can assist in answering: "How much could the community bond for additional construction costs of F1 in order for the community to be equally well off compared with the F3 alternative? And, what would this amount be on a risk-adjusted basis (i.e., recognizing the possibility that the projected annual \$4.8M and \$11 M loss scenarios may each be lower than actual??" In order to answer this question, a definitive construction cost for F1 needs to be derived, and the economic loss estimates under the F3 alternative need to be refined and validated. In addition, it should be noted that the economic loss estimates under the F3 alternative should take into account the Multiplier Effect of these losses over time, both in terms of their net impact to Borough revenues as well as on an aggregate basis.

It should be noted that with the development of any bridge alternative, existing Borough fees and F3 alternative would effectively remain in perpetuity. It should also be noted that if the economic maintenance costs of the Airport Ferry would be eliminated (forecasted at more than \$1.3M for eliminated by the existence of a bridge, would improve the Borough's bonding capability by an known quantity over a finite duration, whereas the relative economic losses associated with the loss estimates to the cruise industry under the F3 alternative are real, the cruise ship companies costs of the F1 alternative. The above approach to subsidized funding of the F1 alternative may Depending on the construction cost of the F1 alternative, it is quite possible for the balance of FY 2002, and which will undoubtedly increase over time). This cost to the community, once would have incentive to contribute additional partial funding to offset the higher construction F1's development cost to be bonded by the Borough for a cost that is less burdensome to the result in the State recommending the F1 alternative over F3, as the State could do so without particularly possible on a risk-adjusted basis given that the cost of such bonding would be a community than the negative economic impact associated with the F3 alternative. This is estimated \$20M, without negatively impacting otherwise existing economic conditions. exceeding its apparent budgetary constraints with regard to development costs.

In summary, I believe that unconditional support of the F3 recommended alternative at this juncture would be essentially blind, and potentially very damaging to the local economy, based on the data received to date. If the data currently contained in the DOT study are borne out, the community may be far better off if it bonded for additional construction costs associated with the F1 alternative vs. no bonding under the F3 alternative, particularly on a risk-adjusted basis. It is also clear that the F1 alternative was removed from consideration prematurely. I believe it is in the vital interest of the Borough to ensure that the F1 alternative is examined more closely before a decision between the alternatives is made. I feel the Borough needs to take more coutrol over the decision-making process by requesting that the State refine its analysis before any decision is made, and that such additional analysis be performed within a rigidly prescribed timeframe. Any other action at this juncture, in my view, would be imprudent at best. Until more information is obtained, it is practically impossible to know with any prudent degree of certainty which alternative best meets the community is needs.

Lastly, I would caution that whatever decision is made will ultimately require widespread support from within the community in order to come to fruition. Without broad support, any alternative selected is vulnerable to failure, and the entire bridge project itself could be placed in joopardy as a result. I therefore believe that the best course of action at this time is to take all steps necessary to get as many people as possible on board, before the train leaves the station and alienates factions of the community in the process.

Some have said that a decision which creates disharmony at the local level would enable the State to avoid funding this project, while sighting our lack of unity as the cause. In any case, a sure way to foster local unity is to take a little more time, do a little more homework, and take more control over the decision-making process by requesting that the State refine its analysis to the satisfaction of all concerned. Only then can a unified decision be made by the community, and only then will the prospects for any bridge be maximized.

Sincerely,

Peter Gigante

Cape Fox Corporation

cc State DOT, Marine Pilot's Association, Borough Assembly. Ketchikan City Council, Saxman City Council, Saxman IRA, KIC, KEDA, Chamber of Commerce

Attachment

U.S. Departi of Transports United States Coast Guard

Commander Seventeenth Coast Guard District

P.O. Box 25517 Juneau, Alaska 99802 Staff Symbol: (oan) Phone: (907) 463-2268 FAX: (907) 463-2273

16590

March 4, 2002

Attn: Mr. Mark Dalton Juneau, Alaska 99801 712 W. 12th Street HDR Alaska, Inc.

Dear Mr. Dalton:

Numerous concerns have been received by the Coast Guard as a result of Governor Knowles and January 21, 2002, indicates that AKDOT&PF is recommending Alternative F3 as its preliminary Perkins recent public announcement outlining their recommended method by the State of Alaska to improve access to Gravina Island from Ketchikan, Alaska. Alternative F3, the alternative that provides access by crossing Pennock Island using two bridges, is AKDOT&PF's recommended Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (AKDOT&PF) Commissioner Joe preferred alternative and that you are still soliciting more comments prior to making a final or prefered alternative for the Gravina Access Project. We note that correspondence dated decision to advance this alternative.

East Channel. Your proposal to restrict vessel traffic to only one-way traffic in Tongass Narrows At first glance this alternative seems more attractive than most of the others because it is located navigational choke point next to the Ketchikan Airport. However, Pilots of the various cruise ships and the Alaska State Ferries transiting the Ketchikan area have expressed grave concern such as cruise ships and military vessels from utilizing the historically used Tongass Narrows Pennock Island. Concerns have been raised that this would in essence prevent larger vessels at a site that avoids conflicts associated with aviation adjacent the Ketchikan Airport and a as a method to mitigate Alternative F3 impacts to navigation is not supported by any of the with the Alternative F3 proposal of constructing a low span bridge between Ketchikan and vessel operators.

Alternative F3 closing off Tongass Narrows East Channel to larger vessels. Their agency plans to station the NOAA Ship FAIRWEATHER in Ketchikan in 2003 and noted that your proposal would not allow its vessels to utilize the Tongass Narrows East Channel to reach its proposed A recent letter from the NOAA Navigation Advisor for Alaska also raises concerns with mooring site.

through the proposed bridge sites illustrated on your plans. One of the cruise ships was diverted familiarization trip during May 15-16, 2000. This trip provided the Coast Guard, AKDOT&PF, south through the west channel between Pennock and Gravina Islands to illustrate the difficulty It may be noted that the Coast Guard raised some of these same issues as well as others in a operators in the command center of four separate cruise ships transiting various directions and your firm an opportunity to make observations and solicit comments from the vessel report "Gravina Access Project" provided to you after we participated in a navigational

necessary from the owners of the vessel prior to this maneuver. Several operators during this trip commented that any bridge that would block the East Channel of Tongass Narrows requiring increasingly taller cruise ships rarely use this restricted passage. Special permission was hem to use the West channel would not be supported by the cruise line industry. of using this proposed route. Although the State Ferry uses this route, the larger

operator perspective the situation would not only be made more disruptive but could prove to be The Coast Guard shares what appears to be a maritime industry wide concern with Alternative F3 resulting in increased congestion at an already cluttered navigational setting. From a vessel proposal has yet to determined. One could easily speculate that they would not be favorable. nazardous during inclement weather. Economic impacts on waterborne commerce of such a

Given that noted above, Alternative F3, as proposed, will not provide for the reasonable needs of navigation and in all likelihood will not receive support or approval from the Coast Guard. If you have any questions, please contact me at (907) 463-2268.

Sincerely,

muy

Management & Navigation Safety Branch Chief, Bridge Section, Waterways J. N. HELFINSTINE

By direction of the Commander U. S. Coast Guard

Encl: (1) Letter from NOAA dated February 25, 2002

- (2) Letters from the Southeast Alaska Pilot's Association
- (3) Correspondence from Captain Bill Hopkins, M/V Kennicott (4) Letter from Capt Karl A. Luck, USCG (Ret)
  - (5) Letter from Captain Frank D. Didier
- (2) Alaska Department of Transportation (1) Federal Highway Administration SS
  - (3) NOAA
- (4) Southeast Alaska Pilot's Association (5) Captain Bill Hopkins (6) Captain Karl A. Luck
- Captain Frank D. Didier

<sup>&</sup>quot;Operational Excellence through Leadership, Teamwork, and Continuous Improvements"

## ATTACHMENT

The DOT study should be specifically refined as follows:

- The DOT's threshold for determining the viability of any alternative needs to reflect not only the construction and life-cycle costs of each project, but more importantly needs to reflect the net economic impact to the Ketchikan area for each alternative.
- The Net Present Value analysis needs to be performed on a risk-adjusted basis, rather than merely a risk-neutral basis, revealing a more accurate and broader range of economic impacts to the community for each alternative.
- The DOT analysis needs to examine not only a 25-year time horizon, but a 50-year time horizon as well.
- What are the total development and construction costs of the F1 Alternative? The F1 alternative needs to be reintroduced, and evaluated under the same criteria as the other alternatives in the study.
- How accurate are the economic loss estimates under the F3 alternative? Simulations need to be performed, as does a more comprehensive economic analysis, in order to more accurately define this impact.
- Any additional investment required to mitigate the risks associated with the F3 alternative need to be quantified and, where appropriate, included in the total development cost of the F3 alternative.
- A 50-year graphed timeline showing the timing and trend of overall net economic impact to the community would be very helpful in understanding and assessing the costs, benefits and risks associated with each alternative.
- All economic costs and benefits need to take into account the Multiplier Effect, and need to be shown in both aggregate terms as well as in terms of their net impact on Borough revenues over time.
- response from the FAA has been received. This question needs to be definitively answered in order to determine if these alternatives are viable.

  If FAA approval for C3(a) and C4 can be obtained, more certain construction costs of these

Will the FAA approve C3(a) or C4? The DOT states this as a concern, but indicates that no

If FAA approval for C3(a) and C4 can be obtained, more certain construction costs of these alternatives need to be determined. \$185M and \$195M are respectively estimated, but there is apparent concern that the actual costs of these alternatives could be much higher. More precise estimates are required to evaluate these alternatives.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

4230 University Drive, #120 Anchorage, Alaska 99508 National Ocean Service Office of Coast Survey

February 25, 2002

Dear Mr. Helfinstine,

Juneau, Alaska 99802-5517 Coast Guard District

Bridge Administrator P.O. Box 25517

Gravina Islands. The Gravina Access Project goal of increased vehicle access to the Ketchikan airport and Gravina Island is laudable and will be appreciated by NOAA personnel when the NOAA Ship am writing to express concerns about the bridges being considered between Revillagigedo and FAIRWEATHER is stationed in Ketchikan in 2003.

advisor. Normally this entails ensuring that the nautical charts and coast pilots reflect the current and NOAA Strategic Goals is to Promote Safe Navigation, which is also my primary duty as navigation However, the Alternative F3 bridges will restrict the navigability of Tongass Narrows. One of the most accurate information for use by mariners. In the case of the Gravina Access Project, I am compelled to offer how a bridge could affect vessel operations in Tongass Narrows.

Summary report, would effectively close the Tongass Narrows East Channel to NOAA vessels, not to Channel, with the bottleneck shape of the waterway restricting vessel passage to only one-way traffic. for the city pier, USCG pier, and the proposed NOAA pier, further delaying vessels transiting through The closure of the East Channel will also lead to increased maneuvering as northbound vessels make mention other large vessel commercial traffic. This closure will increase congestion in the West he narrows. From a mariner's perspective, restricting vessel access in East Channel is not ideal. The East Channel bridge for Alternative F3, as described in the draft Alternatives Evaluation -

The waterways of southeast Alaska are the economic engines for the region and are very important obstructions. I wrote a letter to Roger Healy with AKDOT&PF expressing similar concerns and transportation avenues. Every effort should be made to keep the waterways free of any and all suggested that Alternative F3 be amended or another alternative be adopted. If you have any questions or comments, I can be reached at the above address, telephone number (907) 786-7004, or via e-mail Doug.Baird@noaa.gov.

LCDK Douglas D. Baird, Jr., NOAA Navigation Advisor, Alaska





# SOUTHEAST ALASKA PILOTS' ASSOCIATION

1621 Tongass Avenue, Suite 300 • Ketchikan, Alaska 99901 • 907-225-9696• fax 907-247-9696•seapa@kpunet.net

Capt. Dale Collins, President Capt. Ted Kellogg, Vice President

COMMANDER Edward Sinclair Juneau, AK 99802 Alds to Navigation P. O. Box 25517 17CG District

Dear CMDR Sinclair.

safety concerns regarding the F3 hard link alternative recommended by the DOT for accessing Gravina Island from Ketchikan. SEAPA supports improved access to Gravina The Southeast Alaska Pilots' Association (SEAPA) has serious navigational and Fongass Narrows and a second bridge with an air draft of 200 feet across the West Channel. This design obstructs a major waterway of the Inside Passage and would alternative calls for a bridge with an air draft of 60 feet across the East Channel of Island, but does not support an option which obstructs the East Channel. The F3 negatively impact the safe navigation of shipping in several ways. Obstructing the East Channel will significantly increase the risks associated with increased as all ships will be forced to turn around on arrival or departure (or both if they are using the West Channel). Ketchikan Harbor would become a cul-de-sac port as the maneuvering in the harbor, even in moderate winds. Maneuvering times will be open accessibility from either end is sacrificed. Congestion in the Harbor and in the West Channel will be greatly increased as all but the smallest vessels will have to use the West Channel. Smaller vessels transiting under a low bridge in West Channel will create additional congestion in the area of the existing safety zone and the cruise ship piers.

Added congestion and large ship traffic would effectively eliminate the use of the safety zone as a cruise ship anchorage. With the longer ships calling at the port, this could reduce the berthing capacity by 30%.

Construction of F3 would increase risk and congestion and would deal maritime We strongly recommend the consideration of options F1, C3a, or C4. commerce a crippling blow in access to Ketchikan and ports North.

Sincerely,

Hans H. Antonsen

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Ocean Service

4230 University Drive, #120 Anchorage, Alaska 99508 Office of Coast Survey

February 25, 2002

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities Juncau, Alaska 99801-7999 6860 Glacier Highway Mr. Roger Healy Project Manager

Dear Mr. Healy,

The Gravina Access Project goal of increased vehicle access to the Ketchikan airport and Gravina Island is laudable and will be appreciated by NOAA personnel when the NOAA Ship FAIRWEATHER is stationed in Ketchikan in 2003,

current and most accurate information for use by mariners. In the case of the Gravina Access Project, I navigation advisor. Normally this entails ensuring that the nautical charts and coast pilots reflect the One of the NOAA Strategic Goals is to Promote Safe Navigation, which is also my primary duty as um compelied to offer how a bridge could affect vessel operations in Tongass Narrows.

The East Channel bridge for Alternative F3, as described in the draft Alternatives Evaluation – Summary report, would effectively close the Tongass Narrows East Channel to NOAA vessels, not to Channel, with the bottleneck shape of the waterway restricting vessel passage to only one-way traffic. for the city pier, USCG pier, and the proposed NOAA pier, further delaying vossels transiting through The closure of the East Channel will also lead to increased maneuvering as northbound vessels make the narrows. From the perspective of a mariner scheduled to be stationed in Ketchikan in the near mention other large vessel commercial traffic. This closure will increase congestion in the West future, restricting vessel access in East Chunnel is not ideal.

obstructions. Maybo Alternative F3 can be amended, or another atternative can be adopted. Allowing 200 fect of vertical clearance for both the East and West Channel bridges would allow continued The waterways of southeast Alaska are the economic engines for tho region and are very important transportation avenues. Every offort should be made to keep the waterways free of any and all access to all of Ketchikan and Tongars Narrows for most vessels.

Thank you for your attention to these concerns.

LCDR Jouglas D. Baird, Jr., NOAA Navigation Advlsor, Alaska





## 197070 - 144 July South East Alaska Pilots' Association

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1621 Tongass Avonuo, Sulto 300 • Ketchikan, Alaska 99901 • 807-225-9696 • fax 907-247-9696 • eeapa@kpunet.net

ppt. Dale O Collins, President pt. Ted Kellogg, Vice President

20 February 2002

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, Southeast Region Roger Healy, PE, Project Manager Juneau, AK 99801-7999 6860 Glacier Highway

Dear Mr. Healy,

The Southeast Alaska Pllots' Association supports improved access to Gravina Island, however, we do not support the F-3 alternative recommended by the State of Alaska. Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. We believe a modified F-3 alternative that Includes a 200 foot vertical clearance over the East Channel or alternatives C-3(a) and C-4 of the eight alternatives should be seriously considered for the Gravina access project. The ferry route alternatives G-2, G-3, and G4 have the least impact on Tongass Narrows.

Narrows. The East Channel should never be sacrificed with a low vertical bridge clearance as it the use of Tongass Narrows by large vessels and will delay all vessels due to added congestion caused by limited use of East Channel if a 60 foot vertical bridge clearance is not attered to identified Tongass Narrows as having the highest risk of any waterway in Southeast Alaska due The Gravina Access project Monte Carlo Navigation Simulation describes a greater risk accommodate the large vessels calling at the Port of Ketchikan and transiting through Tongass in West Channel than East Channel by 24%. In an earlier safety study the U.S. Coast Guard West Channels of Tongass Narrows has always provided for orderly arrival/departure and for through traffic of Tongass Narrows by all waterway users. The F-3 alternative severely limits is a primary route on the Inside Passage to points north. The natural bifurcation of East and ncreased risk and congestion is a crippling blow to maritime commerce transiting Tongass to waterway congestion. To substitute a secondary channel for a primary channel with Narrows. We respectfully request the State of Alaska, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities to consider a modified F-3 or C-3(a) and C-4 alternatives if a bridge is the community's recommendation.

S. O. Sincerely,

Dale O. Collins President

Gravina Access Project comments February 20, 2002

- 1. I have been told by members of Southeastern Pilots
  Association that if the larger cruise ships are forced to use the far side of
  Pennock Island due to the low bridge on the road side, they will refuse to
  enter the narrow channel on windy days and possibly choose to bi-pass
  Ketchikan altogether. Ketchikan has nothing left but tourism. No more
  logging, little viable fishing, no mills and no mining. We cannot afford to
  create anything that would adversely affect the tourism industry. The loss
  of even one large ship is a giant loss to our community in terms of dollars.
- 2. The structures required to cross Pennock will very possibly negatively affect the values of the private homes and land on the island. The immensity of both visual and physical impact on a chosen lifestyle must be considered. Even if an offon ramp is provided for Pennock, there are no roads to tie too, no real reason for accessing, no infrastructure in terms of power, water and sewer to entice more building there, just a huge steel structure imposing on a once chosen, somewhat isolated lifestyle.
- 3. It appears to me that due to the location of this same portion of structure, homes as well as private property will have to be sacrificed beginning at the Tongass Ave. approach, across Pennock and continuing completely over to Gravina. I don't believe we can justify the disruption of lives caused by this intrusion nor the loss of tax revenue if the state or other government entity has to purchase this land.
- 4. I think the "build it and they will come" theory is flawed to the core in this case. As yet, I have not heard one proponent of the hard link name any viable industry that would possibly locate in Ketchikan Alaska just because there was access to a new area. We have no water system there, no sewer, no roads and no real reason to go there other than an airport that currently has adequate access. What we do have there, however, are lots of wet lands that are not developable, trees that can't be cut without a fight and animals that the environmentalists won't like being disturbed. this will truly be the "bridge to nowhere" as some are already calling it. Something like the "Third Ave. bypass to nowhere" that we already have.
- 5. To think that folks will flock over there to build homes can be overruled by simply looking at the real estate for sale and rent adds in the local paper.

There is already more homes for sale in Ketchikan than buyers to purchase them and speculative building would be out of question.

- 6. What are the plans to accommodate all the parking at the airport once this access is completed? One must consider a parking area at least two to three times the size as the one on this side at the airport ferry terminal. How far from the terminal building will this parking need to be and who will be responsible to build and maintain that and the roads leading too and from it?
- 7. I would like to see some real numbers on how many of the hundreds of millions of dollars that this link will cost will actually stick to this community. There are no steel structure contractors here and few, if any steel workers. Sure a lot of money will be flying through the freight companies, hotels, restaurants and others, but to say that all these millions will be dropped into this community is not really telling the truth. And "the state will maintain it"? The state can't maintain the roads system that we have now.

Please....reconsider the priorities for this project. The whole of Ketchikan Gateway Borough is an economically depressed area that is currently struggling to cope with the cost and facilities for such basics as sewer disposal, solid waste disposal, enough electricity, road maintenance and more. We shouldn't be considering adding to these burdens on the basis that this "bork barrel" money is available so we better grab it.

Edward H. Purvis

P. O. Box 9033

Ketchikan, Ak. 99901

February 20, 2002



### U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION ALASKA DIVISION 709 West Ninth Street, Room 851 P.O. Box 21648 Juneau, Alaska 99802 907-586-7418 | 907-586-7420 FAX RECEIVED
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(3) MARIE

May 24, 2001

REFER TO HDA-AK File #: ACHP-0922 (5)

Mr. Ed Grossman U.S. Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service 3000 Vintage Boulevard Juneau, Alaska 99801

SUBJECT: Gravina Access Project – Informal Consultation in Accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act

Dear Mr. Grossman:

The Federal Highway Administration and the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) are investigating alternatives to improve surface transportation between Revillagigedo Island and Gravina Island, located in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough in Southeast Alaska [Federal Project No. ACHP-0922(5)]. The attached map identifies the alternatives currently under consideration for the Gravina Access Project. The purpose of this letter is to request your concurrence with respect to Threatened and Endangered species under the jurisdiction of your agency, in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

During the past year, we have conducted preliminary studies of the area to identify potentially affected Threatened and Endangered species. According to our investigation, which is documented in the attached *Gravina Access Project: Federal and State Listed Threatened and Endangered Species Technical Memorandum*, there are no Threatened or Endangered species under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service within the Gravina Access Project area. Additionally, there are no Candidate species or species proposed for listing in the project area. (There are two listed Endangered species under the jurisdiction of the National Marine Fisheries Service in the area, and we have initiated the informal consultation process with that agency.)

During our investigations of the project alternatives and the Threatened and Endangered species within the study boundaries, we coordinated with Steve Brockmann, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Field Biologist in Ketchikan, as well as other federal and state resource agencies. Based on this coordination effort and the findings of the preliminary studies, we have determined that, since there are no listed species in the Gravina Access Project area, the proposed project would have no effect on threatened or endangered species under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We request your concurrence with this determination.

The Federal Highway Administration and the DOT&PF will conduct a complete analysis of each of the project alternatives with respect to their potential effects on fish and wildlife resources in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). We anticipate preparing the EIS during the winter of 2001/2002. We look forward to continued coordination with your agency as we move forward in this process.

Thank you for reviewing the enclosed materials. We look forward to your input.

For more information, please contact Tim Haugh, Environmental/Right-of-Way Specialist at (907) 586-7430.

Sincerely

For

David C. Miller

Division Administrator

## 2 Enclosures

cc: Roger Healy, AKDOT&PF Reuben Yost, AKDOT&PF Mark Dalton, HDR Alaska



## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
ALASKA DIVISION
709 West Ninth Street, Room 851
P.O. Box 21648
Juneau, Alaska 99802
907-586-7418 | 907-586-7420 FAX

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May 24, 2001

REFER TO HDA-AK File #: ACHP-0922 (5)

Mr. James W. Balsiger, Administrator National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration National Marine Fisheries Service P.O. Box 21668 Juneau, Alaska 99801

SUBJECT: Gravina Access Project – Informal Consultation in Accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act

Dear Mr. Balsiger:

The Federal Highway Administration and the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) are investigating alternatives to improve surface transportation between Revillagigedo Island and Gravina Island, located in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough in Southeast Alaska [Federal Project No. ACHP-0922(5)]. The attached map identifies the alternatives currently under consideration for the Gravina Access Project. The purpose of this letter is to initiate informal consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service regarding the potential effects of the proposed action on threatened and endangered species under NMFS jurisdiction, in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

During the past year, we conducted preliminary studies of the project area to identify potentially affected Threatened and Endangered species. We coordinated these preliminary studies with Linda Shaw, NMFS Protected Resource Specialist, as well as other federal and state resource agencies. According to our investigation, which is documented in the attached *Gravina Access Project: Federal and State Listed Threatened and Endangered Species Technical Memorandum*, there are two listed Endangered species (and no Proposed, Candidate, or Threatened species under the jurisdiction of the National Marine Fisheries Service within the Gravina Access Project area): the humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) and the Steller sea lion (*Eumetopias jubatus*). Neither species has critical habitat in the project area; and no Steller sea lion haul-out sites are near the project area. The potential effects of the proposed action on these species have not yet been determined.

The Federal Highway Administration and the DOT&PF are conducting preliminary engineering studies to define the project alternatives. This information will be used to conduct a complete analysis of each of the project alternatives with respect to their potential effects on the humpback

whale and Steller sea lion. The results of this analysis will be documented in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). We anticipate preparing the EIS during the winter of 2001/2002.

We would appreciate your concurrence with our determination of federally listed species in the project area. Additionally, we welcome your input concerning how the humpback whale and Steller sea lion might be affected by the proposed action. We would also appreciate your recommendations for how to avoid and/or minimize impacts to these species.

We look forward to continued coordination and consultation with your agency as the project moves forward. In addition to consultation on threatened and endangered species, we may seek consultation in accordance with the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) requirements of the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. We anticipate such consultation would take place after the engineering studies in which the dimensions of the alternatives are more clearly defined.

For more information, please contact Tim Haugh, Environmental/Right-of-Way Specialist at (907) 586-7430.

Sincerely,

For

David C. Miller

Division Administrator

2 Enclosures

cc: Roger Healy, DOT&PF Reuben Yost, DOT&PF Mark Dalton, HDR Alaska AUB-31-2001 10:48am From-FHWA ALASKA DIV



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UNITED STATES INTERVIOUS OF COMMINISTRATION
National Oceanic a Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
P.O. Box 21668
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

June 4, 2001

David C. Miller, Division Administrator U.S Dept. of Transportation Federal Highway Administration 709 West Ninth Street Room 851 P.O. Box 21648 Juneau, Alaska 99802

RE: Gravina Access Project - Informal Consultation in Accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act

Dear Mr. Miller:

Thank you for your letter requesting the concurrence of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) that endangered humpback whales (Megaptera novaeangliae) and threatened eastern population Steller sea lions (Eumetopias jubatus) are likely to occur in the area of the referenced project. Your determination of these species occurrence was based, in part, on previous consultation with NMFS staff, as well as with Mr. Gary Freitag, NMFS's marine mammal stranding network representative in Ketchikan. NMFS concurs with your determination. You also requested input concerning how humpback whales and Steller sea lions might be affected by the proposed action, and how to avoid and/or minimize impacts to these species.

Humpback whales may be affected directly by underwater noise associated with construction of bridges and farry terminals. These affects may be avoided by the use of seasonal work windows and observers to monitor for the presence of whales and suspend action until whales have cleared the area. Indirect effects may also include underwater noise disturbance from ferry vessel traffic that displaces whales from traversing, resting or feeding in Tongass Narrows. These effects should be analyzed. Current available technology that.

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may reduce underwater noise should be considered in your analysis. Finally, indirect effects may occur if any of the alternatives reduces prey abundance of humpback whales. Prey of humpback whales in southeast Alaska includes herring (Clupea harengus pallasi) and krill (Euphausia pacifica, Thysanoessa spinifera, T. raschii and perhaps occasionally T. longipes) (Bryant et al. 1981; Krieger and Wing 1984, 1986; Baker et al. 1985; Perry et al. 1985; Dolphin 1987b). For more information on the effects of underwater noise and vessel traffic on whales, please see page 73 of the Biological Opinion for authorization of the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands and Gulf of Alaska groundfish fisheries issued on November 30, 2000 (BiOp) and which may be accessed from the following website url <a href="http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/protected-tesources/stellers/plb/dfault.htm">http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/protected-tesources/stellers/plb/dfault.htm</a>.

Steller sea lions are unlikely to be affected by underwater noise associated with project construction activities because they have higher thresholds for noise disturbance and are able to raise their heads out of the water to avoid noise transmission (Richardson, 1995). However, any construction activity that uses underwater explosives would need to be considered for its potential effects to Steller sea lions. An observer could be used to avoid blasting when sea lions are in the area. Indirect effects to Steller sea lions by displacement from Tongass Narrows due to disturbance from construction or ferries and/or diminishment of their prey resources should be evaluated. Steller sea lions feed on a wide range of prey including invertebrates, fish and other marine mammals, although demersal and off-bottom schooling fishes predominate (Jones, 1981; Pitcher, 1981; Gentry and Johnson, 1981; Pitcher and Fay, 1982; D. Calkins, unpublished data). For more information on Steller sea lion foraging, please see pages 84-99 of the BiOp mentioned above.

Thank you for your continued coordination with NMFs for this project. If you have any further questions please contact Linda Shaw of my staff at (907) 586-7510.

Sincerely,

James W. Balgiger

Administrator, Alaska Region

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